REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 9-11, 13-16, 19-23, 25, 26, 28-32, 41-43 and 45-48 remain in the application for further prosecution. Claims 14-16, 19, 41-43, and 45 have been amended. Claims 7-8, 12, 17-18, 24, 27, 33-40, and 44 were previously canceled.

Claims 1-6, 9-11, 13, 20-23, 25, 26, 28-32, and 46-48 have been allowed. Applicants acknowledge the allowance of these claims with appreciation.

Claim Rejection 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 14-16, 19, 41-43 and 45 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,782,918 ("Klardie").

The Office Action has stated that claim 41 inferentially claims an implant, but is only directed to an abutment and a screw, and that the screw of Klardie discloses the claim language of claim 41. Office Action, at 3. While Applicants respectfully disagree, independent claim 41 has been amended to claim a "combination comprising a dental implant, an abutment for attachment to the dental implant, and an axial retention screw." Thus, the dental implant has been positively claimed. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 41 is allowable.

Independent claim 14 has similarly been amended to recite a "combination comprising an abutment, an axial retention screw and an implant." Thus, Applicants submit that claim 14 is also allowable.

Moreover, as explained in Applicants' September 21, 2006, Amendment and Response to Non-Final Office Action, Klardie does not teach or suggest the use of a retention screw, as claimed by both claim 14 and claim 41. Klardie discloses an implant and abutment system used for dental restoration. Col. 3, ll. 39-42. However, Klardie teaches that a retention screw should ***not*** be utilized to connect an abutment to an implant, as a variety of shortcomings exist when retention screws are used. Col. 1, ll. 16-36; Col. 2, ll. 25-41. In fact, a stated object of Klardie is to "reduce the necessity of removing and reworking the implant connectors due to failure of individual *threaded elements*." Col. 2, ll. 47-49 (emphasis added). Therefore, rather than using a threaded retention screw, Klardie teaches the use of a locking pin 90 to help secure the abutment to the implant. Col. 4, ll. FIGs. 1-2. The locking pin in no way interacts with the implant, but rather is threaded only into the abutment. Col. 6, ll. 48-67. The locking pin spreads

apart two segmented portions of the abutment to cause the abutment lip to snap into a groove in the implant. Col. 5, ll. 15-30. Thus, the locking pin simply deforms the lower portion of the abutment to lock the abutment to the implant, and never engages the interior bore of the implant. By contrast, as recited in claim 14, "the through-bore receives the axial retention screw for limiting axial movement of the abutment in response to the screw ***threadably engaging*** the interior bore of the implant." (emphasis added). Likewise, claim 41 requires "the through-bore receiving the axial retention screw for limiting axial movement of the abutment in response to the screw ***threadably engaging*** the interior bore of the implant." (emphasis added). Therefore, Not only does Klardie fail to anticipate or render obvious claim 14 or claim 41, but Klardie specifically teaches away from having the abutment screw threadably engage the interior bore of the implant. As such, Applicant respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

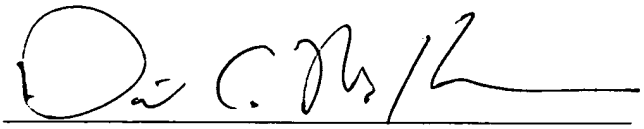
Claims 15-16, and 19 depend from independent claim 14, and claims 42-43, and 45 depend from independent claim 41. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable for the same reasons.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the pending claims are patentable over the prior art and action towards that end is respectfully requested.

If any matters may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number shown.

Respectfully submitted,



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